

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5-13, 17-20, and 45-48 are pending herein.

I. The obviousness rejections of claims 1, 4, 9-11, 17-20 and 45-48 based on Goodale (US 5,125,075) in view of Tsuji (US 6,047,315), as noted on page 3 of the Office Action.

The USPTO respectfully rejects claims 1, 4, 9-11, 17-20 and 45-48 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Goodale (US 5,125,075) in view of Tsuji (US 6,047,315). Claims 1, 45, and 48 are independent claims. Claim 4 has been respectfully cancelled.

A. The cited references do not teach or suggest a structure for sending a disabled circulation report to the report destination specified by the disabled circulation report processing unit based on the report destination information included in said circulation information file, as claimed in independent claims 1 and 45.

Claim 1 claims in relevant part:

“wherein when the next one of plurality of circulation clients is incapable of circulation because the transmission of the circulation information file or the document file to the next one of the plurality of circulation clients terminates incorrectly, said transmission client or one of said plurality of circulation clients, having sent said document file and said circulation information file to said next one of said plurality of circulation clients being incapable of circulation, conducts at least one of (1) ~~notifying incapability of circulation by said next one of said plurality of circulation clients to other ones of said plurality of circulation clients or said transmission~~ **clientsending a disabled circulation report to the report destination specified by the disabled circulation report processing unit** based on the report destination information included in said circulation information file, (2) sending said document file and said circulation information file to other one of said plurality of circulation clients next to said next one of said plurality of circulation clients, (3) sending said document file and said circulation information file to a proxy client of said next one of said plurality of circulation clients.” (emphasis added)

Claim 45 similarly claims “sending a disabled circulation report to a report destination based on report destination information included in said circulation information file.” No new matter is added by the amendments. Support for the amendments is found at page 14, line 19; page 17, lines 14-15; and page 19, line 16 to page 20, line 2 of the substitute specification filed

November 16, 2006. Regarding these limitations, it is respectfully not seen where the cited references teach or suggest the claimed structure quoted above.

For example, the USPTO respectfully notes on pages 3-4 of the Office Action that Goodale does not teach or suggest a structure that conducts at least one of the actions specifically claimed in claims 1 and 45. The USPTO respectfully attempts to overcome this deficiency in Goodale by arguing that Tsuji teaches notifying the sender by way of an error message when a client is incapable of performing operations. However, it is respectfully important to note that **Tsuji only respectfully teaches notifying the sender, and does not teach or suggest anything regarding sending a report to a report destination specified by the disabled circulation report processing unit**, as claimed in claims 1 and 45. Additionally, Tsuji respectfully does not teach or suggest the specifically claimed disabled circulation report processing unit, as claimed in claims 1 and 45.

In contrast, present Figures 1 and 3 illustrate at least one possible embodiment of the claimed structure quoted above. For example, as explained on pages 19-20 of the substitute specification, when transmission of the circulation file by circulation transmission processor 16 fails to terminate correctly, **disabled circulation report processor 21 specifies that a report is sent to a report destination (such as a client 2 or server 1) based on the report destination information**. Thus, the system sends a disabled circulation report to the report destination specified by the disabled circulation report processing unit, as claimed in claims 1 and 45.

Overall, it is respectfully important to note that Tsuji only respectfully teaches that an error message is sent to the sender of a item, which is different than sending a report to a report destination specified by a disabled circulation report processing unit, as claimed in claims 1 and 45. This distinction is important and non-trivial because it results in significant advantages over conventional systems. For example, with the system of Tsuji, it is only possible to send an error message to a single destination, i.e., the sender. In contrast, the specifically claimed system of claims 1 and 45 allows for a report to be sent to any destination specified by the disabled circulation report processing unit, for example, a server or another

client. **This allows for greater flexibility in reporting than is possible in the system of Tsuji.**

Thus, it is respectfully asserted that the cited references, taken either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest all of the limitations of independent claims 1 and 45. Therefore, it is respectfully asserted that independent claims 1 and 45 are allowable over the cited references.

B. The cited references do not teach or suggest sending the document and the circulation information to at least one of the second one of the destinations and a proxy of the first one of the destinations if it is determined that the first one of the destinations is incapable of circulation, as claimed in claim 48.

Claim 48 claims in relevant part:

“(3) sending, if it is determined that the first one of the destinations is incapable of circulation, the document and the circulation information **to at least one of the second one of the destinations and a proxy of the first one of the destinations.**” (emphasis added)

Regarding these limitations, it is respectfully not seen where the cited references teach or suggest the claimed structure quoted above.

For example, on page 10 of the Office Action, the USPTO respectfully notes that Goodale does not teach or suggest sending the document file and the circulation information file to another one of the plurality of circulation clients, or sending the document file and circulation information file to a proxy client of one of the plurality of circulation clients. The USPTO respectfully attempts to overcome this deficiency in Goodale by arguing on pages 10-11 of the Office Action that Tsuji teaches notifying the sender via an error message when a client is incapable of performing operations.

However, it is respectfully important to note that notifying a sender via an error message is respectfully completely different from “sending . . . the document and the circulation information to at least one of the destinations and a proxy of the first one of the destinations.” For example, **in Tsuji, only an error message is sent to the sender.** It is respectfully asserted that **Tsuji does not teach or suggest anything about continuing to**

send the mail item itself to other destinations or a proxy of the first destination, as claimed in claim 48.

In contrast, present Figures 1 and 3 illustrate at least one possible embodiment of the claimed limitation quoted above. As explained on page 20 of the substitute specification, selection/transmission process 22 can specify a proxy client 2, and circulation clients 2 are specified one after another based on destination information. **The circulation file can be sent to one of these proxy client or second destinations**, as claimed in claim 48.

The distinction noted above is important and non-trivial because it results in significant advantages over conventional systems. For example, using the limitations described in claim 48 allows a circulation file to be properly circulated without interruption even if one of the receiving clients is unable to receive the file, **resulting in less downtime and increased efficiency**. In contrast, in the device of Tsuji, it is respectfully noted that circulation stops and the sender is notified, in which case there may be a time delay before the problem is fixed and circulation can resume.

Thus, it is respectfully asserted that the cited references, taken either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest all of the limitations of claim 48. Therefore, it is respectfully asserted that claim 48 is allowable.

C. Further explanation.

Applicants respectfully note the following further explanation regarding claims 1, 45, and 48.

Particularly, when the next one of a plurality of circulation clients is incapable of circulation, a circulation client having sent said circulation information file to said next one of said plurality of clients can send a disabled circulation report to the report destination specified by the disabled circulation report processing unit.

Specifically, since the report destination information is included in the circulation information file sent together with the document file, the circulation client having sent said circulation information file to said next one of said plurality is not required to ask about the

report destination and can settle the disabled circulation without any help from the other circulation clients when the transmission of a circulation information file terminates incorrectly.

Additionally, when the transmission of a circulation information file terminates incorrectly, the circulation client having sent said circulation information file to said next one of said plurality can send the document file and the circulation information file to another one of the plurality of circulation clients, or send the files to a proxy client. Thus, when the transmission of a file terminates incorrectly, the client having sent the file can continue the circulation without interruption.

D. The dependent claims.

As noted above, it is respectfully asserted that independent claims 1 and 45 are allowable, and therefore it is further respectfully asserted that dependent claims 9-11, 17-20 and 46-47 are also allowable.

II. The obviousness rejections of claims 2, 3, and 5-8 based on Goodale in view of Tsuji in view of Mori (US 6,526,425).

As noted above, it is respectfully asserted that independent claim 1 is allowable, and it is further respectfully asserted that Mori does not overcome the deficiencies of Goodale and Tsuji described above in part I. Therefore, it is respectfully asserted that dependent claims 2, 3, and 5-8 are allowable.

III. The obviousness rejection of claim 12 based on Goodale in view of Tsuji in view of Murakami (US 2002/0161746).

As noted above, it is respectfully asserted that independent claim 1 is allowable, and it is further respectfully asserted that Murakami does not overcome the deficiencies of Goodale and Tsuji described above in part I. Therefore, it is respectfully asserted that dependent claim 12 is allowable.

IV. The obviousness rejection of claim 13 based on Goodale in view of Tsuji in view of Phillips (US 7,058,696).

As noted above, it is respectfully asserted that independent claim 1 is allowable, and it is further respectfully asserted that Phillips does not overcome the deficiencies of Goodale and Tsuji described above in part I. Therefore, it is respectfully asserted that dependent claim 13 is allowable.

V. Conclusion.

Reconsideration and allowance of all of the claims is respectfully requested.

If there are any additional charges with respect to this Amendment or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130.

Please contact the undersigned for any reason. Applicants seek to cooperate with the Examiner including via telephone if convenient for the Examiner.

Respectfully submitted,

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